

nothing more than tax overpayment made by taxpayers.

Anyone who has ever looked at Washington for any length of time knows that one of only two things will happen to the surplus. We can give it back to the people who earned it or Washington will find a way to spend it.

I think Jesse "The Body" Ventura was right. The government should apologize and then refund the money back to the people to whom it belongs in the first place, the taxpayers of America.

ANOTHER VIEW ON SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, let me set the record straight. The money that comes in here belongs to the American people. But what we fail to deal with is the history.

All during the Reagan administration, Democrats and Republicans in this House spent Social Security money and used it like a credit card. We built up a \$5 trillion debt for the Cold War. Now, after almost 10 years of work, since I have been in the Congress, since 1988 and under Mr. Clinton for the last few years, we have got a surplus. What does the majority leader offer us? Let us take the surplus and give it away and leave that credit card debt there.

No American family, when they receive money in a Christmas bonus or whatever, says, "Well, we got all this credit card debt; let's go get deeper in debt." That would not be a financially prudent family. The United States Congress, acting on behalf of the American people, ought to pay off the credit card debt in Medicare and in Social Security.

CONGRATULATING COACH JIM PHELAN AND MOUNT ST. MARY'S MOUNTAINEERS ON EARNING BID TO NCAA BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate coach Jim Phelan and the Mount St. Mary's Mountaineers on earning a bid to the NCAA basketball championship for only the second time in their school's history.

The Mounties won the right to go to the Big Dance by defeating the Blue Devils of Central Connecticut State on Monday night by a 72-56 margin. Monday night's victory was the third straight upset for the Mountaineers who were seeded sixth entering the

Northeast Conference Tournament. The Mount was led by the smooth shooting of Gregory Harris and the tenacious defense of Melvin Whitaker.

In addition to earning a right to play in the NCAA championships, Monday's victory was also an historic event for their longtime coach. Jim Phelan became only the fourth coach in NCAA history to win 800 games. He joins the ranks of Adolph Rupp, Dean Smith and Clarence Gaines and is the winningest active coach in the NCAA. Coach Phelan's 800 wins demonstrate his commitment to the school, his players and his community. I am convinced the Hall of Fame is just around the corner. Congratulations Mount Saint Mary's, and congratulations Coach Jim Phelan.

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GUNS OVER PEOPLE

(Mr. GUTIERREZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, during the past year did we not hear the Republicans say something about the rule of law? I think I recall some Republicans saying everyone deserves his or her day in court, even if it means tying up Congress, the White House and the judiciary, costs the taxpayers \$40 million, huge legal bills for everyone. But when it comes to their good friends in the gun lobby and their precious time and money, well, the Republicans simply will not allow them to be threatened with a lawsuit or held accountable through civil action.

Mr. Speaker, once again the GOP does the bidding of the National Rifle Association, preempting cities like Chicago who dare to sue the gun industry, the modern-day merchants of vengeance. A Republican bill will be introduced limiting lawsuits against the gun makers, ironically sponsored by the same gentleman who once told the Committee on the Judiciary a plaintiff deserved her day in court. In the eyes of the GOP, a sitting President can be dragged into a civil suit, but not the gun industry.

Clearly, the Republicans care more about guns than people. I guess that is what GOP stands for: "Guns Over People."

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET DOES NOT ADD UP

(Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, the truth is now out about the President's budget. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, the CBO, has now documented the obvious. The President's budget just does not add up.

It is not simply a case of the usual Washington accounting tricks. The ac-

counting is so outrageous that no serious analyst can defend it. In fact, the nonpartisan CBO, Congressional Budget Office, shows exactly where and why it does not add up. The budget busts the spending caps that were signed into law by the President in 1997, in the summer of 1997. And even more disturbing, Mr. Speaker, this budget, not only does it not save Social Security, it even dangers Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve better.

They deserve an honest budget.

They deserve a budget that will continue American prosperity.

They deserve a budget that protects Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, the President's budget does not do that.

PROTECT SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

(Ms. STABENOW asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support a Democratic administration that has brought us from very large deficits to large surpluses and to say that the next step is to protect Social Security and Medicare and pay back the Social Security Trust Fund. We are not really out of debt until we do that.

Mr. Speaker, if we cannot pay off the national debt when we have a surplus, when will we do it?

Never.

Mr. Speaker, this is a test of the current Congress. Are we going to continue fiscal responsibility or go back to the spending and the deficits of the 1980s?

I stand to support Social Security, Medicare and paying off the debt. If we do that, we put real dollars back into people's pockets by lowering interest rates, which means our mortgages, our credit cards, our car payments go down.

Mr. Chairman, we need to bring down the debt and protect Social Security and Medicare for future generations, and I call on my colleagues to join us in doing that.

THE REPUBLICAN PLAN IS BETTER THAN A PAY RAISE

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, tax relief is as good as a pay raise, maybe even better. A pay raise could mean higher taxes. It could result in sending more money to Washington, D.C., and have very little extra money jingling around in our pockets. But tax relief is more money in the household budget.

Mr. Speaker, Americans do one of two things when they get a little extra

money in their pocket. It is saved or it is spent. Either is good for the economy. Saving the money from a tax cut would provide more resources, more capital for creating new jobs and new businesses. Spending the tax relief not only provides for the needs of hard-working Americans, but the demands for products will create new jobs and sustain the jobs we have.

Mr. Speaker, tax relief can be as good, if not better, than a pay raise, and the Republican plan will not only restore the integrity of Social Security, rebuild our national defense, strengthen education, but it will also provide much-needed tax relief for hard-working Americans.

SAVE OUR AMERICAN TREASURES: MEDICARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY

(Mr. GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this is a good day. I am glad the debate is on tax cuts versus Social Security and Medicare and paying down our national debt. Medicare and Social Security are two of the greatest, most effective programs our country has ever created. They provide the two fundamental keys to retirement security: medical and financial security.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress has the responsibility to every American, past, present and future, to save these national treasures.

The good news is that we have the opportunity to ensure the long-term stability of these programs. The bad news will only come if people try to politicize the programs or, worse yet, dismantle them. We can strengthen Social Security, Medicare and pay down the debt. They are popular with the American people for the simple reason that they work.

Mr. Speaker, let us work together to strengthen Medicare and Social Security. Social Security and Medicare are needed for the current seniors, the baby boomers, and our children and our grandchildren.

NO EXIT STRATEGY

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to talk about our administration's foreign policy and the men and women in our Nation's military service. I have three words to describe the administration's strategy for deployment of U.S. troops to police Kosovo, and they are: No exit strategy.

Can we honestly ask the men and women of our Armed Services to stand up and once again become the world's police of foreign policy decisions?

Should we not justify to the American people the need for intervention based on some realistic, identified and threatened vital national interest?

I should think so.

However, when a defective strategy results in a multi-year deployment, billions of dollars in cost to the American taxpayer and the risk in lives of every American soldier over there, it is time for us to say no. It is time that our foreign policy marches to a new cadence, one that protects our vital national interests and the lives of our hard-working, dedicated men and women in our nation's military.

On behalf of our Nation's interests and the lives of our service men and women, I yield back this dangerous foreign policy and the balance of my time.

EDUCATION MUST BE OUR NUMBER 1 PRIORITY

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ran for Congress, and I am here today because I believe that our children's education must be the number one priority in our country. Education is another of President Clinton's major budget priorities because he also agrees that we must prepare all of our children for the high-skill, high-wage jobs that will insure America's leadership in the world marketplace and at the same time prevent dependency on welfare here at home.

Public education is the backbone of our country. It is why we are a great Nation. Public education is available to all.

This Congress we have an opportunity that comes along once every 5 years, and that opportunity is to review and update the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. ESEA is best known for Title I, the program that educates the disadvantaged. Title I is important because it helps disadvantaged children achieve along with their more fortunate peers.

Title I must be supported. Tax relief for the well off must wait.

UNITED STATES VULNERABLE TO BALLISTIC MISSILE ATTACKS

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, it is the official policy of the United States to remain vulnerable to a ballistic missile attack. That might be surprising to many, but it is true, even though it flies in the face of common sense. Iraq, North Korea, Iran are all embarked on nuclear weapons programs that would enable them to reach the United States with a ballistic missile, and China already has that ability.

Mr. Speaker, the only thing we have to protect us is a relic of the Cold War, an ABM treaty with a country that no longer even exists.

Do my colleagues think the leaders of Iraq and North Korea and Iran and Communist China are impressed with our ABM treaty? I do not think so.

Mr. Speaker, the administration's timid, weak and uncertain steps to begin building a national defense system are not enough. They are too little, and I am afraid they are going to be too late.

I urge the Congress to take the lead on this vital issue, Mr. Speaker, and as my liberal colleagues so often love to say:

Let us do it for the children.

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE LEON HIGGINBOTHAM

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to invite my colleagues of the House of Representatives to join me this evening for a special order to pay tribute to a wonderful and outstanding American, a jurist of great renown, the late Judge Leon Higginbotham. He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Honor in 1995 and the Raoul Wallenberg Humanitarian Award, and in 1994 South African President Nelson Mandela asked Higginbotham to be an international mediator. I would hope that we would spend our evening, this evening, paying tribute to this great American.

I STAND HERE FOR THE CHILDREN

Mr. Speaker, let me also say that I stand here for the children. Be it liberal or conservative or moderate, I do not know who could not stand for the children.

I believe we should, if my colleagues will, pay off the debt and as well save Social Security and Medicare. At the same time, we can give targeted child tax credits to businesses that provide child care services, and we can also provide targeted tax credits to stay-at-home parents. We can do all of this at once by doing the right thing and standing for our children.

AIR FORCE JUNIOR ROTC PROGRAM AT ROME HIGH

(Mr. BARR of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it seems as if every day we are reading or hearing a new story about the difficulty our military forces are having recruiting and retaining top-notch personnel. Our military is being stretched thinner and thinner by missions of